

S E C R E T

Foreign Policy Review Meeting

Following this note are a number of pieces of backup material which are listed on the sheet of paper following this note. I'm not sure which of these will be useful to you so I'm describing below my best guess as to how this meeting evolved in hopes of helping you decide your priorities.

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Last week the East-West Discussion Group met to discuss NIE 11-4. [] had told [] to lead the discussion and to focus on the policy implications of the NIE so [] said in effect,

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"Let's suspend disbelief for now and assume the NIE is right. Then what might be appropriate US policies for operating in such a world? How do they compare with what the US is doing?"

The discussion that followed mostly concerned strategic forces and among other things the following points came up.

- The Soviet may be operating very much as the US would operate if the JCS were making policy, i.e. doing things that are prudent from a military perspective such as building forces to do the best they can against a perceived military threat even if the chances of "success" appear small.
- Maybe US initiatives in SALT and elsewhere are not having much influence because the benefits from the Soviet perspective of going along are not all that great and neither are the costs of not going along.
- The psychological and political implications of the "perceived" US-USSR military balance are as important or more important than the "real" implications.

Somehow out of this emerged the idea of this Foreign Policy Review Meeting. However, Secretary Brown decided to use the meeting as a vehicle to get a Presidential decision on DoD spending limits for the next five-year defense program (FYDP). Accordingly he set his people to developing a paper describing the base case FYDP (which is roughly the one described in the papers here on the DoD Consolidated Guidance), the incremented FYDP and the decremented FYDP. This paper which we may get before Tuesday will lay out some thoughts on these programs. Secretary Brown probably wants to show what these programs mean on some absolute scale. But my impression is that the differences in perceptions among OSD, the Joint Staff and the Services are too great for this to happen. Furthermore, as of Friday evening they aren't thinking in terms of addressing really significant changes in Defense programs if such would be called for by the worldview captured in NIE 11-4.

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The above suggests two possibilities. The first is, in spite of having talked to Dr. Brzezinski and the President about it, Dr. Brown is not in tune with the function of a meeting to discuss a question like, "How would we restructure our Defense programs if we let the NIE 11-4 view drive them?" The second possibility is, although the Foreign Policy Review Meeting emerged from the East-West Discussion Group exchange, its character was changed fundamentally by Dr. Brown's conversations with Dr. Brzezinski and the President so that the meeting will be a discussion of the FYDP.

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In anticipation of the possibility that meeting might focus on fundamental changes I have asked [] to think about any significant changes that might result in intelligence collection programs if the NIE 11-4 view was to drive intelligence. They will feedback any ideas on Monday.

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- 25X1A
- A. NIE 11-4-78
 - Your Presidential Briefing Talking Points
 - Briefing Paper
 - NIE 11-4-78
 - B. NIE 11-3/8-77
 - Your 17 Jan & 31 Jan Presidential Briefing Talking Points
 - The NIE Cover Memorandum
 - Vol. I of NIE 11-3/8-77
 - C. NIE 4-1-78
 - Your 10 Apr & 23 May Presidential Briefing Talking Points
 - NIE 4-1-78
 - D. Theater Nuclear Forces
 - Material for the PRM-38 23 August SCC Meeting
 - Assessment of Theater Nuclear Forces
 - E. Sino-Soviet Military Balance
 - Assorted material on forces along the Sino-Soviet border
 - F. Defense Department Planning
 - Summary of DoD Consolidated Guidance
 - SECDEF's Discussion of the Guidance
 - G. Soviet Air Defense
 - Your Presidential Briefing Talking Points

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